

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

Please AMEND claims 1-2, 5, 7, and 11-15 in accordance with the following:

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An information distributing method ~~using layout information~~ for distribution of information corresponding to a ~~response to a request~~ from a user terminal, comprising:

- receiving the request from the user terminal, and ~~outputting~~ transmitting, to the user terminal, headlines attached to respective information sets that may correspond to the received request and a way in which these the information sets are is handled in an information source as layout information ~~to the user~~;
- displaying the headlines on the user terminal according to the layout information so the user can select any of the displayed headlines and receiving an identity of the selected headline from the user terminal, a designation of information to be distributed according to the layout information; and
- distributing to the user terminal the designated information of the set corresponding to the headline the headline identity indicates.

2. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An information distributing method ~~using layout information~~ for distribution of information corresponding to a request from a user terminal, comprising:

- storing a preference corresponding to information required by a user;
- receiving the request from the user terminal, and retrieving information indicating a way ~~the information sets are~~ is handled in an information source, corresponding to a the request using the preference;
- outputting the retrieved handling information as a way the information sets are handled in the information source as layout information to the user terminal;
- receiving from the user terminal ~~a designation of information to be distributed according to on the layout information~~ an identity of a selected information set; and
- distributing to the user terminal the designated information corresponding to the selected

set.

3. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method according to claim 1, wherein said information indicating the way the information is handled in the information source is information about a position in the information source and/or information about an importance in the information source.

4. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method according to claim 2, wherein said information indicating the way the information is handled in the information source is information about a position in the information source and/or information about an importance in the information source.

5. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An information receiving method ~~using layout information~~ for externally receiving necessary information, comprising:  
externally outputting a request designating possibly required information;  
externally receiving information, as headlines attached to respective information sets that may correspond to the received request as layout information, indicating and a way the information ~~sets is~~ are handled in an information source as layout information;  
receiving an identity of a selected headline a designation of information determined by a user ~~as necessary~~ according to the layout information; and  
externally requesting distribution of the ~~designated~~ information of the set corresponding to the headline the headline identity indicates.

6. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method according to claim 5, wherein said information indicating the way the information is handled in the information source is information about a position in the information source and/or information about an importance in the information source.

7. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A portable computer-readable storage medium storing a program used to direct a computer for distributing information corresponding to a request from a user terminal, by:  
receiving the request from the user terminal, and ~~outputting~~ transmitting, to the user terminal, headlines attached to respective information sets that may correspond to the received request and a way in which these the information sets are ~~is~~ handled in an information source as layout information ~~to the user~~;

displaying the headlines on the user terminal according to the layout information so the user can select any of the displayed headlines and receiving an identity of the selected headline from the user terminal;~~a designation of information to be distributed according to the layout information;~~ and

distributing to the user terminal the designated information of the set corresponding to the headline the headline identity indicates.

8. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A portable computer-readable storage medium storing a program used to direct a computer for externally receiving ~~distribution~~ of necessary information, by:

externally outputting a request designating possibly required information;

externally receiving information, as headlines attached to respective information sets that may correspond to the received request as layout information, indicating and a way the information sets is are handled in an information source as layout information;

receiving an identity of a selected headline~~a designation of information~~ determined by a user ~~as necessary~~ according to the layout information; and

externally requesting distribution of the ~~designated~~ information of the set corresponding to the headline the headline identity indicates.

9. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The storage medium according to claim 7; wherein

said information indicating the way the information is handled in an information source is information about a position in the information source and/or information about an importance in the information source.

10. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The storage medium according to claim 8, wherein

said information indicating the way the information is handled in the information source is information about a position in the information source and/or information about an importance in the information source.

11. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An information distribution apparatus for distribution of information corresponding to a request from a user terminal~~using layout information,~~ comprising:

a handling information retrieval unit receiving a request from the user terminal and

retrieving handling information indicating a way ~~the~~ information sets are ~~is~~ handled, in an information source, corresponding to the request;

a layout information output unit outputting to the user terminal ~~the retrieved handling information~~ a way the information sets are handled in the information source as layout information; and

an information distribution unit distributing information of a set corresponding ~~requested for distribution~~ according to the layout information to the user terminal.

12. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An information distribution apparatus ~~using layout information~~ for externally distributing necessary information, comprising:

a request output unit externally outputting a request for designation of possibly required information;

a layout information output unit externally receiving information as headlines attached to respective information sets that may correspond to the request and indicating a way the information sets is are handled in an information source ~~of the possibly required information~~ as layout information; and

a distribution request unit externally requesting distribution of the information ~~determined by a user as necessary information according to the layout information~~ of the set corresponding to a identified headline.

13. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An information distributing method for distributing information corresponding to a request from a user terminal ~~using layout information~~, comprising:

adding information indicating a way ~~the~~ information sets are ~~is~~ handled in an information source as layout information ~~to each piece of information~~;

receiving a request for information from a ~~a~~ the user terminal based on the added ~~according to the layout~~ information; and

distributing to the user terminal ~~the designated information of the set corresponding to~~ received request.

14. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An information distribution apparatus for distribution of information corresponding to a request from a user terminal ~~using layout information~~, comprising:

a handling information retrieval means for receiving a request from the user terminal and retrieving handling information indicating a way ~~the~~ information sets are ~~is~~ handled, in an

information source, corresponding to the request;

a layout information output means for outputting to the user terminal ~~the retrieved handling information~~ a way the information sets are handled in the information source as layout information; and

an information distribution means for distributing information of a set corresponding requested for distribution according to the layout information to the user terminal.

15. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An information distribution apparatus ~~using layout information~~ for externally distributing necessary information, comprising:

a request output means for externally outputting a request for designation of possibly required information;

a layout information output means for outputting to the user terminal ~~the retrieved handling information~~ a way the information sets are handled in the information source as layout information; and

an information distribution means for distributing information of a set corresponding requested for distribution according to the layout information to the user terminal.